GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1259
ANSWERED ON:26.11.2001
POWERS TO STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARDS
ARUN KUMAR

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether even after expiry of more than 25 years since the establishment of the Central and State Pollution Control Boards, our waters are dirty, the air is foul, health care costs are mounting and people as well as Courts are worried sick about the environment;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the State Pollution Control Boards (SPCBs) are dominated by their non-technical members;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) if not, whether spending restrictions imposed on SPCBs prohibit them from meeting capital expenditure requirements despite having surplus revenue; and

(f) if so, the steps taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) & (b) No Sir. After the establishment of Central & State Pollution Control Boards, steps have been taken to control industrial pollution, prevention of pollution of water and air from various sources etc. Due to the intervention of Central & State Pollution Control Boards, identified polluting categories of industries have set up pollution control devices. Significant steps have also been taken to reduce vehicular pollution. The other important steps taken to reduce/abate pollution include use of beneficiated coal in thermal power plants, laying guidelines on siting of industries, introducing concept of waste minimisation, persuading local bodies to improve management of sewage and solid wastes, management of hazardous wastes and others.

(c) & (d) State Pollution control Boards consist of Members as per the composition laid down under the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. .

(e) & (f) Central government have not imposed restrictions on SPCBs for incurring any capital expenditure. However, the Water Cess reimbursements made by the Central Government to the State Pollution Control Boards are to be utilised for preventing and controlling pollution in accordance with the provisions of section 17 of the Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, subject to the condition that the expenditure on office operations and establishment should not exceed 25% of the amount released.